

"SHALL RAILROADS CONTINUE?"

A Treatise on Railroads by
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From the time of Watt's fundamental principle to this day of electro-motive power, the spider-"Steam"-has spun its web of rails from the hills of Western Maryland to the Gold Coast of San Francisco. The Iron Horse has belched its way into every isolated corner of our nation, laying the foundation for modern electromotion and engine power.

Today Engineers are constantly advancing the question- "Railroads for how long?" The answer lies in the facts.

With the acceleration of the developement of Diesel and electromotive power, the Iron Horse is rapidly moving into grazing pastures; but its roadbed of steel ribbons still survives, and on this network travels the existance of some of the vertebrae of the nation's backbone. The coal fields of Pennsylvania; the stock markets of Chicago; the oil dumps of Texas; the manufacturing centers of New England; and the food-stuff centers of California and Florida are all linked to the consumer by the railway. These railways are the arteries through which flows the vital fluid of America's commerce.

Will the Internal Combustion engine as used in aviation and automotion replace locomotion and electrification? Engineer's can tell only by progressive experiment, and rest assured that the transition will not come for many a day. Why then the success of General Motors, Ford, and their

subsidiaries. The answer is small time transportation. Cheap? Yes. Efficient? Comparatively. But what about the larger manufacturers and exporters? It would cost a convoy of Vans huge sums in time and money to move the products of the bigger producers. As long as modern manufacturers continue to turn out massive articles requiring care and rapid delivery, railroads will provide the transportation. Automotion cannot possibly produce the tractive effort necessary to move the commodities hauled by Diesel and electric power. The constant advancement of both of these types make it even more probable for the growth of railways.

Today, as the nation faces a world crisis, railroads loom higher and higher upon the horizon as the only means for attaining transportation necessary to meet the demands of the government. The rapid production of the many instruments of war make it all the more necessary for quick moving and early delivery. It's fantastic to imagine an auto-truck hauling an order of tanks or light cannon!

Passenger transportation makes up a comparatively small percentage of the railraod's character- freight is the major source of income.

Following the crash of '29, when railroads "hit the bottom", the climb back up the ladder was a slow and tedious one. Gradually they have swung onto the up-trend, and today the mercury is bubbling up more rapidly. The future holds even a greater possibility for railways- for as the wheels

of Engineering gain momentum along the path into the horizon, the rails of the "Iron Horse" move forward also, carrying the improved power of progress.